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Watergate Knowledge Disclaimed By Stans

WASHINGTON (AP) — Maurice H. Stans disclaimed all knowledge of the Watergate affair and other political espionage Tuesday, saying it was his job to raise the money; others' to conduct the campaign.

He also said he was told that former White House counsel John W. Dean III authorized the raising of money for payment to Watergate defendants and their lawyers and that he gave $75,000 for that purpose, not knowing the reason.

"I was not very familiar at all with the operation of the campaign committee," President Nixon's chief fund-raiser told Senate investigators. "I was only familiar with their objectives."

Stans, frustrated in efforts to defer his testimony, said he gave $75,000 cash to Nixon's personal lawyer 12 days after the Watergate breakin after being told: "I need all the cash I can get ... This is for a White House project I have been asked to take care of. You will have to trust me."

Stans said the lawyer, Herbert W. Kalmbach, told him "I am asking for it on high authority," and would take only cash, not a check. Stans said he was not told then on whose authority.

"What went through your mind as to who this person might be?" asked Sen. Joseph Montoya, D-N.M.

Stans said he learned from Kalmbach only six weeks ago that "the request to raise the money came from John Dean." Dean was fired April 30 as counsel.

Stans said Kalmbach told him, "he asked Dean whether it was a legal transaction and Dean assured him it was.

"Being unwilling to proceed on that basis he (Kalmbach) went to Mr. Ehrlichman. Mr. Ehrlichman told him it was a legal transaction."

John D. Ehrlichman resigned April 30 as Nixon's chief domestic adviser.

Kalmbach has told the General Accounting Office that the $75,000 was part of $210,000 he raised specifically for the Watergate defendants."

Stans testified "there may have been some unintended technical violations" of campaign finance laws, but that his knowledge of the other activities was limited to what he read in the press.